

April 6, 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson, Chairman, and Members of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

From: Dr. Gail M. Morrison, Deputy Director and Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of the NCATE/State Partnership Program Progress Reports
South Carolina State University
and the
University of South Carolina-Aiken

Background

The Commission entered into a partnership agreement with the S.C. Department of Education and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCATE) in 1995 to conduct joint reviews of teacher education programs at our public colleges and universities. Our current partnership protocol requires that an on-site visit occur at each of the institutions with representatives of the three partners serving on the evaluation team. The first review cycle occurred between 1996 and 1999; it resulted in all eleven of our teacher education programs institutions receiving NCATE accreditation which was effective for five years. The second review cycle occurred between 2003 – 2005; it resulted in full accreditation for nine institutions and provisional accreditation for two institutions with follow-up site visits two years after the initial review.

Historically, NCATE has reviewed teacher education programs on a five-year cycle. In 2005, the five-year cycle was changed to a seven-year cycle. Since the time of the first review cycle, NCATE has undertaken a major revision of the standards that are used to assess teacher education units. NCATE revises its standards every five years to ensure that the standards reflect the most current research on teaching. The new standards developed in 2000 are performance-based, which means that a teacher education unit must be able to demonstrate that it has in place an assessment system that can determine the level of its graduates' knowledge and skills. For example, NCATE

reviewers look for evidence that teacher candidates know the subject matter they plan to teach as shown by their ability to explain important principles and concepts delineated in professional and state standards. The NCATE 2000 standards are substantially different from the 1995 standards, and substantially more difficult to meet, in large part because they require units to be able to demonstrate through data that graduates of their programs have the knowledge and skills to teach successfully P-12 students. The accreditation process has shifted its focus from what are typically called “input measures” to “output measures.” That is, what do the graduates of the program know, what can they do, and how can the unit prove that graduates know and can do what the unit claims?

NCATE standards are applied to the teacher education unit for an evaluation of the entire unit. In addition, NCATE coordinates the evaluation of individual programs through an established review process by specialized professional associations (SPAs) and national accreditation organizations. Under our partnership protocol, programs that do not have a review by a SPA or an accrediting organization are reviewed by a consultant hired by the Commission for that purpose, who joins the on-site review team.

During the second review cycle, the Commission hired four national consultants who evaluated the programs that were not reviewed by SPAs and do not lead to initial teacher certification. These programs are typically at the graduate level and may include programs such as a Masters of Education in Elementary Education or Special Education. One CHE consultant joins the NCATE team to conduct an on-site review and validate documentation presented in the institution’s self-study reports. The consultant also examines all programs for compliance with the Commission’s program productivity standards.

In spring 2004, South Carolina State University and USC-Aiken underwent their NCATE reviews, which consisted of a five-day visit by a team of national and state reviewers. The visiting team is called the Board of Examiners (BOE). This body presents a report to NCATE’s Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) which assesses whether or not the education unit meets each of six standards. The UAB makes the accreditation decision based on the BOE’s findings. Institutions visited in the spring of 2004 had accreditation decisions made by the UAB in fall 2005.

As is the practice with all program reviews, each program receives one of four recommendations: 1) commendation of excellence; 2) full approval; 3) provisional or probationary approval; or 4) recommendation for termination. Typically, provisional approval is awarded under four circumstances: 1) the unit does not receive full NCATE accreditation, in which case all programs in the unit are given provisional approval until the next evaluation which usually occurs two years later; the program has not received full approval from the SPA or specialized accrediting/professional body; under State Board of Education policy, a program has two years from the UAB decision to obtain full

approval from the SPA; 2) the program does not meet CHE's program productivity requirements; or 3) the CHE consultant recommends provisional approval given a number of substantive weaknesses identified in the program.

A summary report with recommendations was presented to the Commission on Higher Education on May 5, 2005. The Commission approved the recommendations by the Committee. Two of the recommendations required additional material to be submitted from the institutions by December 2005. These recommendations were:

- The Commission on Academic Affairs recommends that the Commission urge all institutions to submit or resubmit program reviews to the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA) at the earliest opportunity until full approval is obtained for all programs for which a SPA evaluation process exists; until full SPA approval is obtained, program status awarded by CHE remains at "provisional approval".
- The Commission on Academic Affairs is deeply concerned about the evaluation findings for a variety of programs at all three of the institutions, irrespective of accreditation status; therefore, it recommends that the by December 1, 2005, a progress report that summarizes the responses made by the institutions for improvements made in their programs.

The attached report is a summary from South Carolina State University and USC-Aiken on the progress of the institutions concerning evaluation findings and the current status of program reviews submitted to the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA). The State Department of Education has implemented annual reporting for Schools of Education focusing on diversity, technology, progress on standards not met, and plans of action for areas of improvement cited. The SDE will share this information with CHE staff and the staff will monitor the status of the SPA reports.

Recommendations

1. The staff recommends that the Committee accept on behalf of the Commission this report as information regarding progress made in response to areas of improvement identified by the UAB and CHE consultant and the updated SPA status for South Carolina State University and USC-Aiken.
2. The staff recommends to the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing that it grant to the programs in Education at South Carolina State University and USC Aiken the designations presented in the attached report along with the accompanying recommendations found on the pages listed below:

South Carolina State University
USC Aiken

See pp. 5-13
See pp. 13-18

3. The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing urge all institutions to submit or resubmit program reviews to the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA) at the earliest opportunity until full approval is obtained for all programs for which a SPA evaluation process exists; until full SPA approval is obtained, program status awarded by CHE remains at “provisional approval.”
4. The staff recommends that the Committee require South Carolina State University to resubmit periodically to CHE staff a progress report on SPA status on the **M.Ed. degree in Counselor Education**, the **B.A. degree in Secondary Education -Social Studies**, the **B.S. degree in Art Education**, the **B.S. degree in Business Education**, and the **B.S. degree in Health Education**.
5. The staff recommends that the Committee require USC-Aiken to resubmit periodically to CHE staff a progress report on SPA status on the **BASEd degree in Special Education – Multi-categorical**.

NCATE/State Partnership Program Progress Reports
South Carolina State University
and
USC-Aiken

I. South Carolina State University

A Continuing Accreditation visit was conducted by the NCATE Board of Examiners on April 24-28, 2004, at South Carolina State University. At its October 2004 meeting, the NCATE Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) reviewed the materials and reports for South Carolina State University and rendered the decision to continue the accreditation of the unit at South Carolina State University at the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels. South Carolina State University addressed the following areas for improvement as identified by the UAB:

1. *Data related to the specific standards of the disciplines have not been aggregated to determine whether the standards have been met (Standard 1).*

The Unit has developed methods of collecting data that provide information aligned with the specialized area standards and unit standards. Rubrics have been developed to provide performance-based evidence of candidate and student learning. Consequently, the Elementary Education, English (Master's) and Physical Education program have received national recognition. In addition, programs that were conditionally approved, Industrial Technology Education and Early Childhood Education, also received national recognition using the newly developed performance-based data. All education programs reviewed by professional learned societies have received national recognition. Two state-reviewed programs have submitted revised reports to the South Carolina Department of Education.

The staff reports that the following programs have still not received national recognition or accreditation:

- Counselor Education – M.Ed. – Elementary – CACREP
- Counselor Education – M.Ed. – Secondary – CACREP
- Secondary Education – Dramatic Arts – B.A. – NAST
- Art Education – B.S. – NASAD
- Business Education – B.S. – Self Study sent to SDE
- Health Education – B.S. - American Association for Health Education (AAHE)

The Admissions and Monitoring Database has been extended to include standards related to each program area. These standards have been aligned to performance assessments that will provide evidence that candidates can demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with each standard.

Candidate performance data including quantitative and qualitative assessments and multiple field experiences provide a variety of opportunities to evaluate candidate competencies as well as K-12 student learning. General assessments across all program areas that should be included in all teacher candidate portfolios include: long-range plans, daily lesson plans, teacher work samples, bulletin board development, case studies, philosophy statement, Praxis I, II, and PLT scores, interview assessment, video taped lesson and assessment, samples of student work, reflection papers, disposition survey results, ADEPT evaluations, affiliation and participation with the professional community.

2. *The unit does not have a systematic plan for tracking candidates throughout their field experiences and clinical practice (Standard 3).*

The application package for Pre-Student Teacher Exploration/Experimentation and Practice (Pre-STEP) Service Learning/Field Experiences has been modified to gather data necessary to ensure that students receive experiences in a variety of diversified settings. Through the use of the revised package, the unit collects data from the candidate and all cooperating professionals involved in the field experience. The method of assigning students to a clinical experience site was developed by categorizing the clinical sites into four groups of diversity: ethnicity, religious/culture, socio-economic, and special needs. Faculty members must specify the diversity group and assignment for each activity provided for teacher candidates. Activities and diversity of the site must be related to information being studied in the course.

Tracking information on field experiences ensures that experiences are diverse and include: assignment and courses from which the Pre-STEP assignment is made; name and location of clinical site; diverse backgrounds (race, culture/religion, special needs, SES) of student population, and race and gender of site supervisors. University supervisors, the professor of the class for which the Pre-STEP assignments are made, and the site supervisor evaluate the field experience activities. This data is collected from the candidate, site supervisor and the university supervisor and placed on a data base by the Data Coordinator. Students are to be placed in all four diversity settings during their matriculation.

In addition, the CHE consultant reviewed the **M.Ed. in Elementary Education**, recommending continuing approval status with the following areas suggested for improvement:

1. *The Admission and Monitoring Matriculation Process for Teacher Education Programs (Revised Fall 2003): The M.Ed. in Elementary Education has developed over time and with collaborative energies of faculty, staff and administrators. It does appear that documents are not always consistent and that stages for monitoring vary in documents. It is strongly recommended that unit faculty and staff arrive at one model for matriculation and archive documents which are inconsistent with current matriculation and assessment practice.*

The Education faculty has agreed on the matriculation model for Elementary/Secondary M.ED students. This model identifies four stages for each M.Ed. candidate: Admission to Graduate School, Admission to an Education Program, Admission to Action Research, and Admission for Candidacy for Graduation. This information was shared with and approved by the Graduate Studies Council and the Teacher Education Council which consist of representatives from all program areas.

2. *Informal discussions were conducted with a number of National Board of Professional Teaching Standards candidates in the M.Ed. in Elementary Education program. However, specific numbers were not located in documentation. Also, the importance of NBPTS activities was not apparent in documentation or seemed on a decline in terms of interest and focus in the program. If one considered that support in acquiring NBPTS certificates is a sign of productivity, these numbers should be readily available and used in marketing strategies.*

A \$7 million grant from the US Department of Education's Teacher Quality Enhancement funded the tuition for 150 M.ED candidates from 2001 – 2004, to prepare for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Since the grant ended in 2003, there has been tremendous decrease in the enrollment and/or candidates seeking National Board Certification although the Unit continues to advertise and encourage candidates to seek this certification. The NBPT Standards have been aligned to the Department of Education's conceptual framework to ensure that competencies are being addressed throughout the matriculation process. Information on the success of SCSU National Board candidates is received annually from CERRA. One third of the 150 candidates successfully completed National Board certification.

3. *A systematically designed faculty development plan should be developed as aligned with the faculty productivity evaluation process as well as specific program improvement initiatives. This professional development initiative should include an assessment which links program enhancements with faculty evaluation and development plan. An example includes the myriad of technology activities which have been assessed informally. Data are not available to qualify the impact of such “rich technology activities” on the program or student learning.*

A Faculty Development Plan for Education faculty members was submitted. All professional development activities must be included in the faculty member's planning document and the final annual evaluation form. The South Carolina State University Evaluation Instrument form, which includes the faculty member's plans for professional development, was submitted.

4. *Data presented on the program and program option was unclear and nonspecific. Assessment in the Elementary Education Master's program should be reconstructed along with documented data driven decisions regarding program improvement.*

Future data on the Elementary/Secondary M.ED Program will be disaggregated by program area using the following assessments: professional and subject matter comprehensive examinations, course content rubrics, assessment of NBPT Standards, research project, employer surveys, follow-up surveys, and disposition surveys. Data for M.ED. Elementary/Secondary program candidates/completers during the 2004-2005 academic year were included in Appendix F.

5. *Data on program candidates was unclear and nonspecific. Data should be maintained on candidates by disaggregating program data.*

Disaggregated data by program area for M.ED. Elementary/Secondary program candidates/completers during the 2004 – 2005 academic year are indicated in Appendix F of the Progress Report.

6. *Data on program graduates is also nonspecific and should be disaggregated to reveal specific number of graduates for each specific graduate program option.*

Disaggregated data by program area for M.ED. Elementary/Secondary program completers during the 2004 – 2005 academic year are included in Appendix F.

7. *The admissions and monitoring process has been developed:*

- *It is strongly recommended that administrators and staff monitor documents for consistency—discard old forms and graphics.*
- *Archive documents which are inconsistent with current matriculation and assessment practice.*

The Admissions and Monitoring Process for M.ED. Elementary/Secondary Education candidates include the following stages: admission to graduate school, admission to an education program, admission to action research, and admission to candidacy for graduation.

8. *Documentation on program faculty should be clear and coherent with systematic data maintained on full-time faculty, part-time and adjunct faculty.*

- *A systematically designed faculty development plan should be developed.*
- *The plan should be aligned with faculty productivity and evaluation process.*
- *The faculty development plan should include program improvement strategies and document such efforts.*
- *The plan should be aligned with program delivery, diversity, and technology needs.*

The Faculty Evaluation process at South Carolina State University provides opportunities for professional growth, feedback and reflection that inform each faculty member of areas of strength and deficiencies, as well as professional development needs and expected improvements. Each year faculty members complete a planning document denoting the professional development activities they plan to participate in during the academic year. Each faculty member's development plan is revised every year based on the goals and objectives of the university, the college and the department. These activities are submitted to and discussed with the departmental chair and approved by the dean of the college. Faculty members are evaluated at the end of the year based on their success in the completion of activities in the proposed planning document, their teaching effectiveness, and course evaluations. The evaluation process is the medium by which all faculty at South Carolina State University receive an identifiable, systematic, judicious performance evaluation.

The CHE consultant also reviewed the **M.Ed. in Secondary Education** recommending continuing approval status with the following areas suggested for improvement:

1. *The admissions and monitoring process has been developed but use is “uneven” in the Secondary program.*

- *Documents are not always consistent.*
- *Stages for monitoring vary in documents.*
- *Assessment system should be maintained from entry to exit.*

The Admissions and Monitoring Process for M.Ed. candidates was included in the report and indicates the following stages: admission to graduate school, admission to an education program, admission to action research, and admission to candidacy for graduation. This model has been agreed upon by education faculty, the Teacher Education Council and the Graduate Studies Council. Data on M.Ed. candidates from entry to exit is in Appendix F.

2. *Documentation on program faculty should be clear and coherent with systematic data maintained on full-time faculty, part-time and adjunct faculty.*
 - *The credentials of all faculty members should be systematically evaluated and aligned with program delivery, diversity and technology needs of the unit.*

Data pertaining to M.Ed. full-time and adjunct faculty are included in the report and indicate that there are fourteen tenure-track faculty members with earned doctorates and four adjunct faculty members. Faculty evaluations are completed annually. Evaluations include updated credentials, professional development activities (especially technology), research and grantsmanship, and community and campus activity participation.

3. *A systematically designed faculty development plan is critical to unit productivity.*
 - *Faculty development plan should include program improvement strategies and documenting such efforts.*
 - *Faculty development activities should be provided for adjunct faculty members.*
 - *Faculty development for full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty members should be assessed for impact on the performance outcomes of candidates.*

The Faculty Development Plan and Faculty Evaluation Instrument are in Appendix E-1 and E-2 in the progress report. As a part of the Faculty Development Plan for 2005 – 2006, faculty members in the Department of Education are taking the Praxis II and PLT examinations so that they can better align course requirements with the required competencies of these examinations. Analyses will be performed to determine if taking these examinations by faculty members will improve candidates' performance.

4. *Annual program evaluations should take place. Such evaluations should provide structure and support for specialty area reviews in the future.*

Using the information gathered on program candidates, full-time and part-time faculty, in conjunction with information collected using the Annual Program Evaluation Instrument, each program will be assessed. Programs and procedures will be revised based on the results of the analysis of this information.

Recommendation

- The staff recommends that the Committee accept on behalf of the Commission this report as information regarding progress made in response to areas of improvement identified by the UAB and CHE consultant and the updated SPA status.
- The staff recommends that the Committee urge South Carolina State University to submit or resubmit program reviews to the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA) at the earliest opportunity until full approval is obtained for all programs for which a SPA evaluation process exists; until full SPA approval is obtained, program status awarded by CHE remains at “provisional approval.”
- The staff recommends that the Committee require South Carolina State University to resubmit periodically to CHE staff a progress report on SPA status on the **M.Ed. degree in Counselor Education**, the **B.A. degree in Secondary Education -Social Studies**, the **B.S. degree in Art Education**, the **B.S. degree in Business Education**, and the **B.S. degree in Health Education**.

South Carolina State University
Table 1

Program Title	Degree	Options/Tracts/Concentrations (If Applicable)	Recommendation
Education Administration	EdS EdD		Full Approval Full Approval
Special Education	BS	Educable Mentally Handicapped Emotionally Handicapped K-12 Learning Disabilities K-12	Full Approval
	MEd	Educable Mentally Handicapped Emotionally Handicapped Learning Disabilities	Full Approval
Counselor Education	MEd ¹	Elementary Secondary	Provisional Approval
Elementary Education	BS MEd ²	Basic Elementary Education Early Childhood Education Reading Education Physical Education	Full Approval Full Approval
Early Childhood Education	MAT		Full Approval
	BS MAT		Full Approval Full Approval
Secondary Education – Major is in disciplines:			
English	BA	Secondary Education	Full Approval
Biology	BS	Secondary Education	Full Approval
Mathematics	BS	Secondary Education	Full Approval
Chemistry	BS	Secondary Education	Full Approval
Social Studies	BA	Secondary Education	Full Approval
Dramatic Arts	BA ³	Secondary Education	Provisional Approval
Physical Education	BS	Secondary Education	Full Approval
Secondary Education	MEd ²	Business English	Full Approval Full Approval

		Mathematics	Full Approval
		Social Studies	Full Approval
		Science	Full Approval
		Secondary Physical Education	Full Approval
		Chemistry	Full Approval
	MAT	English	Full Approval
		Math	Full Approval
		Science	Full Approval
		Speech Pathology & Audiology	Full Approval
Art Education	BS ⁴		Provisional Approval
Business Education	BS ⁵		Provisional Approval
Health Education	BS ⁶	K-12	Provisional Approval
Family and Consumer Science Education	BS		Full Approval
Industrial Technology Education	BS		Full Approval
Music Education	BS		Full Approval
		Music Choral K-12	
		Music-Instrumental K-12	

¹ Program accredited by Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) for a two-year period with conditions through October 31, 2007.

² Reviewed by CHE consultants

³ Program has not received accreditation from National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).

⁴ Approval from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) has not been obtained.

⁵ Rejoinder is currently being reviewed by a State Department of Education Review Team.

⁶ Program review report has not been submitted to the American Association of Health Education (AAHE) for approval.

II. USC-Aiken

A Continuing Accreditation visit was conducted by the NCATE Board of Examiners on February 21-25, 2004, at USC-Aiken. At its October 2004 meeting, the NCATE Unit Accreditation Board reviewed the materials and reports for USC-Aiken and rendered the decision to continue the accreditation of the unit at USC-Aiken at the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels. USC-Aiken has submitted a progress report for UAB-cited and CHE consultant-cited areas for improvement:

- *The secondary social studies program has not been recognized by its specialized professional association (Standard 1).*

Since the visit, the School of Education has worked with the History Department to collect data on certain assessments identified in the rejoinder. However, since

the visit, the SPA has changed the assessment requirements and the School of Education worked with the History Department to reduce the number of assessments to eight to include in the SPA report that was submitted on February 1, 2006. The School of Education received notification from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) that their program has been approved for national recognition.

- *The plan for assessing candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the Master's of Education in Elementary Education has not been fully implemented (Standard 2).*

At the time of the NCATE/CHE visit, the mid-point check and final rubric were just being developed. These have now been developed. At the time of the visit, the program had just moved to a cohort model. At that time, the cohort was past mid-point, so no data for mid-point was collected for this cohort. However, this first cohort of 14 candidates is graduating in December 2005. Their final projects are being presented this week and data for these final projects is being collected.

In the Fall 2005, a second cohort was started. The mid-point for this cohort will not be until Fall 2006. At that point the mid-point transition data will be collected.

- *The unit does not have sufficient full-time, tenure-track faculty to support the integrity, quality, and continuity of its programs (Standard 6).*

Since the February 2004 visit, the School of Education has requested additional positions for both the 2005 and 2006 fiscal year. However, funding for these requests has not been approved.

The CHE consultant reviewed one program, the **M.Ed. program in Elementary Education** and verified that the program is in compliance with the CHE Academic Degree Program Productivity Requirements. The consultant recommended continuing approval status for the M.Ed. in Elementary Education with the following suggestions for improvement:

1. *The faculty of the M.Ed. program in Elementary Education should continue to expand and refine the unit's assessment plan to measure candidate performance and make continuous improvement to the program.*

At the time of the NCATE/CHE visit, the mid-point check and final rubric were just being developed. These have now been developed. At the time of the visit, the program had just moved to a cohort model. At that time, the cohort was past mid-point, so no data for mid-point was collected for this cohort. However, this

first cohort of 14 candidates is graduating in December 2005. Their final projects are being presented this week and data for these final projects is being collected.

In the Fall 2005, a second cohort was started. The mid-point for this cohort will not be until Fall 2006. At that point the mid-point transition data will be collected.

2. *A system should be developed to track candidate's professional achievements while they are in the program and after graduation.*

The School of Education and USC-Aiken's Office of Institutional Research developed an alumni survey that includes questions on professional achievements. A copy of the survey is attached at the end of this document.

Additionally, the exit survey used by the School of Education was modified to include questions about professional activities while candidates were in the program. These survey questions are being used for the first time this semester with the cohort that is graduating in December.

3. *The School of Education should develop and implement a comprehensive minority faculty recruitment plan with specific hiring goals that are monitored annually. The plan should be revised as needed to ensure that more minority faculty members are hired.*

The School of Education has a Diversity Plan that it shared with the team in February 2004. Through the Diversity Plan, the School of Education has been supporting two instructor level faculty in pursuit of their doctorates. It is anticipated that these two instructors will complete their respective programs by December 2006 if not sooner.

In addition, USC-Aiken has a clearly articulated recruitment plan that ensures that the position advertisement realistically depicts the expectations for the faculty member.

Search committee guidelines require that the initial meeting of the search committee be with the Director of Human Resources who is also the Affirmative Action Officer.

USC-Aiken has developed a Diverse Faculty Action Plan that is reviewed each year by the School of Education's Diversity Committee.

A top priority focus for the 2004-2005 USC-Aiken's Strategic Plan was to develop a plan to retain and attract minority faculty and staff.

Dr. Tom Hallman, Chancellor of the USC-Aiken Campus, has taken a personal interest in the recruitment of minority faculty. Dr. Hallman has met with minority faculty, staff, and community members to ask present employees of USC-Aiken and the Aiken County community to join the effort to recruit minority faculty.

Currently the School of Education has three searches in progress. There have been 11 applicants for the three searches. Three of the applicants are from minority groups. The searches are in progress with the hopes of making offers sometime in early January 2006.

4. *The faculty of the M.Ed. program in Elementary Education should develop and implement an aggressive minority graduate student recruitment plan. The plan should be revised as needed to ensure that more minority candidates enroll in the degree program.*

The target for the new cohort that started in the Fall 2005 was a Title 1 school that had some minority faculty. It was hoped that offering the program at the Title 1 school would entice the minority faculty to join the cohort. However, this strategy did not work. None of the minority faculty at the school signed up for the cohort (although 8 of 30 teachers at the school have enrolled in the cohort).

Because this strategy failed, the School of Education is again developing another strategy to recruit minorities into its program.

5. *The School of Education should implement a comprehensive, systematic plan that is aligned with the School's conceptual framework and degree programs to provide continuous development and improvement of faculty members' knowledge and professional skills.*

Prior to the NCATE/CHE visit, the School of Education faculty determined that it needed to enhance its ability to provide more opportunities to better prepare candidates to teach diverse groups of students. As a result the faculty decided they needed to be better informed about teaching diverse groups of people. As a result the Head of the School of Education worked with the Chancellor to secure funds to hold annual diversity conferences for faculty and candidates. The first conference was held in March 2003 (prior to the NCATE visit), with subsequent conferences in March 2005, and August 2005. Although these conferences/workshops were not a result of a systematic plan for professional development, they were part of a systematic plan to look at data to determine what areas need to be improved, and what is needed to make the improvement.

In 2005, it was discovered that the local school district was investing in SMART Boards for teachers to use in the classroom. To better prepare our candidates to be able to use this technology when they graduated, the School of Education invested in the purchase of 5 SMART Boards and 9 Sympodia. Workshops for the faculty on the use of the SMART Boards were conducted over the summer so faculty could use the SMART Boards beginning the fall semester.

Again, the professional development opportunities did not come out of a systematic plan for professional development, but came out of the systematic analysis of data. From this analysis, it was determined what was needed to meet the needs as identified by the analysis of data. Both the diversity conferences and SMART Board workshops align closely with the conceptual framework of the School of Education which integrates technology and diversity throughout its program.

The USC-Aiken School of Education has responded noting that a factual error was made regarding the assessment of program objectives. The NCATE report identifies a comprehensive exam as the means through which students demonstrate proficiency. However, the program assesses candidate performance using a written portfolio and an oral presentation of the portfolio. Additionally, while the School of Education agrees with the recommendation for improvement by refining the unit's assessment plan, they explain that limited data for the M.Ed. program was available at the time of the NCATE visit because the current assessment plan was newly implemented.

The School of Education also addresses the recommendation for a comprehensive minority faculty recruitment plan by explaining that the current plan is to focus on developing qualified staff members. Additionally, the School believes faculty members are provided with sufficient support for professional development.

Recommendation

- The staff recommends that the Committee accept on behalf of the Commission this report as information regarding progress made in response to areas of improvement identified by the UAB and CHE consultant and the updated SPA status.
- The staff recommends that the Committee urge USC-Aiken to submit or resubmit program reviews to the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA) at the earliest opportunity until full approval is obtained for all programs for which a SPA evaluation process exists; until full SPA approval is obtained, program status awarded by CHE remains at "provisional approval."

- The staff recommends that the Committee require USC-Aiken to resubmit periodically to CHE staff a progress report on SPA status of the **BASEd** degree in **Special Education – Multi-categorical**.

University of South Carolina-Aiken
Table 3

Program Title	Degree	Options/Tracts/Concentrations (If Applicable)	Recommendation
Educational Technology	MEd		Full Approval
Special Education	BASEd ¹	Multi-categorical	Provisional Approval
Elementary Education	BAEd	General	Full Approval
Elementary Teacher Education	BA		Full Approval
	MEd		Full Approval
Early Childhood Education	BAEd		Full Approval
Secondary Education	BSEd	Biology	Full Approval
		Comprehensive Science	Full Approval
		Chemistry	Full Approval
		Math	Full Approval
	BAEd	English	Full Approval
		Comprehensive Social Studies	Full Approval

¹ Program is nationally recognized with conditions from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) through Spring 2008.